

VZCZCXYZ0494  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUCNDT #0873 2782225  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 052225Z OCT 09  
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7260  
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7261

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 000873

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/27/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNGA](#) [AORC](#) [AF](#)  
SUBJECT: MADAGASCAR DELEGATION EXCLUDED FROM GENERAL DEBATE

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: Madagascar's unconstitutional president, Andry Rajoelina, was scheduled to speak in the General Debate in the afternoon of Friday, Sept. 25th. He was blocked by a vote, following a point of order raised by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, acting in their role of president of Southern African Development Community (SADC). The Madagascar delegation walked out and has not occupied their seat in the GA hall since. The issue of Madagascar's participation will now presumably go to the credential committee.END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) The U.S. delegation was alerted shortly before Madagascar's time to speak that the SADC states planned to attempt to block Rajoelina from speaking. SADC had discussed this with the office of the GA President earlier, and it was agreed, according to the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), that the President would have to rule against SADC under UNGA Rule of Procedure 29. However, the rules provided that SADC could then call for a vote on whether to uphold his decision. The SADC countries had agreed among themselves to walk out during the Madagascar speech if they lost the vote.

¶3. (U) DRC Foreign Minister Thambwe Mwamba, speaking for SADC, introduced the point of order. The GA President ruled against him. The question was put to the GA. Many delegations were absent, and almost all in the hall (United States included) refrained from voting. (Note: There had been so little alert that the matter took almost all delegations by surprise, and so very few had had the opportunity to think the question through to any firm view. End Note) The result was 4-23-6 to overrule the President. Madagascar's delegation then left the hall. Those voting were: Yes (in support of the President's decision): Denmark, Ecuador, Madagascar, and Malaysia. No (in favor of exclusion): Angola, Argentina, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Congo, DRC, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Seychelles, So. Africa, Suriname, Swaziland, U. Rep. of Tanzania, Venezuela, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Abstaining: Cameroon, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Mali, Trinidad-Tobago and Vanuatu.

¶4. (C) This was a confusing situation late on a Friday night. The President was not clear in explaining the situation when he put his decision to the vote, and as a result many delegations did not understand what they were voting on. As is clear from the voting list, most Africans, while opposed to the Madagascar coup, did not join SADC in this maneuver. The Senegalese PermRep (one of the most respected here) told the senior area advisor that the AF group had not been properly consulted and he considered the move unorthodox and not supportable. The Benin Foreign Minister made the same argument. (Note: Several African countries were advocating that Guinea be excluded from the General Debate on the same grounds but the motion was never raised. End Note)

¶5. (SBU) OLA told Poloff that, as per United Nations rules and procedures, the vote only barred President Rajoelina from speaking during the general debate. OLA reiterated this

to LegOff and advised that under Rule 29, the Madagascar delegation pending a meeting of the Credentials Committee is entitled to attend meetings, speak and vote. Madagascar has not, however, reached out to the Secretariat for clarification on this point. The Credentials Committee is currently scheduled to meet in late November. Per OLA, the PGA or a member of the Credentials Committee could ask for a special meeting on the issue of Madagascar's credentials now.

The Secretariat, including OLA, approached the PGA's chef de cabinet to see whether the PGA wanted to convene a special meeting of the Credentials Committee, and the answer was

"no." No Credentials Committee member has asked for a meeting to date. OLA advised that the Secretariat plans to move up the general meeting to the end of October.

RICE